> Bread tickets, meat coupons, all these artificial arrangements are harmful, and they are harmful to those who have the least with which to buy. . . . * We want to avoid any rationing of our people in food.[55]

This was all very well, but if there was only a limited supply, something had to be done to make it go round. Mr. Runciman himself was soon forced by the intensified submarine attacks to take a different view. On 15th and 16th November, 1916, there was another debate in the House on Food Prices and Supplies. Two days previously the War Committee had agreed in principle with the proposal which I had repeatedly urged on them, that a Food Controller should be appointed with drastic powers to deal with the production, supply and price of food-stuffs.* Mr. Runciman accordingly outlined in the course of the Debate the intention of the Government to appoint a Food Controller, and the additional powers it proposed to acquire to enforce economies, and to control manufacture, distribution and sale of food. " If it becomes necessary for us to embark on food tickets,[55] he said, *A change* " obviously we must have the power given *of mind* to us to do it without long and protracted discussion. Directly the need becomes apparent, power ought to be given to us to act.[55] He instanced the working of the Ministry of

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as an example of what could be done in the way of efficient Government control of industry by means of securing the co-operation of able business men, and as some reassurance to those who might share his fear and dislike of systems of control.

* See Vol. II, Chapter xxxiii, pp. 966-969.